

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 02503 091218Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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O R 091143Z APR 77 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5634
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, IS
SUBJECT: PERES NOW SEEN AS FAVORITE TO LEAD LABOR LIST

REF: TEL AVIV 2470

1. INTENSE NEGOTIATIONS WITHIN THE LABOR PARTY ARE CONTINUING TODAY, DESPITE THE FACT THAT IT IS THE SABBATH AND THE END OF PASSOVER. FEW DOUBT THAT PERES WILL EMERGE FROM TOMORROW'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING AS LEADER OF THE LABOR PARTY--BUT PROBABLY NOT OF THE ALIGNMENT. A MAPAM SOURCE, RESIGNED TO A PERES VICTORY, TOLD US THAT THE ODDS ARE 90 PERCENT IN FAVOR OF MAPAM BOLTING. ACCORDING TO HIM, THE 10 PERCENT CHANCE OF HOLDING THE ALIGNMENT TOGETHER, SLIM AS IT IS, IS BASED ON PERES AND ALLON REACHING AN AGREEMENT FAVORABLE TO THE LATTER, ALBEIT WITH PERES ON TOP, AND THE TWO THEN JOINTLY APPROACHING MAPAM WITH A PLEA FOR UNITY. (THERE ARE REPORTS THAT PERES IS ALREADY APPEALING TO MAPAM TO KEEP THE ALIGNMENT INTACT.)

2. TALK OF ANY CHALLENGE TO PERES FOCUSES ON ALLON. IT
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 02503 091218Z

APPEARS THAT VIRTUALLY NO CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN, AT THIS POINT AT LEAST, TO ANY COMPROMISE CANDIDATE FROM MAPAI, THE LABOR PARTY'S DOMINANT FACTION. HAIM ZADOK, FOR EXAMPLE, REPORTEDLY DOES NOT WANT THE PREMIERSHIP, AND EBAN SEEMS TO BE FIRMLY IN THE PERES CAMP. NOR DOES A DIRECT ALLON CHALLENGE APPEAR TO BE DEVELOPING. ALLON CAN NOT EVEN COUNT ON THE SUPPORT OF ALL OF WHAT WAS THE RABIN

CAMP. ACCORDING TO A WELL PLACED AHDUT AVODAH SOURCE, HALF OF RABIN'S FORMER SUPPORTERS ARE SWITCHING TO PERES. FURTHER-MORE, ALLON DOES NOT HAVE THE TIME TO WORK OUT A BONA FIDE CANDIDACY. CURRENT ESTIMATES ARE THAT HIS CHALLENGE TO PERES WOULD NOT RECEIVE 40 PERCENT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE VOTE--AND A RESULT BELOW THAT FIGURE WOULD BE HUMILIATING.

3. THE SITUATION APPEARS TO HAVE SETTLED DOWN TO THE ALLON CAMP (COMPOSED ESSENTIALLY OF HIS AHDUT AVODAH FACTION) ATTEMPTING TO WRING AS MANY CONCESSIONS AS POSSIBLE FROM PERES BEFORE AGREEING TO JOIN A CONSENSUS ON BEHALF OF THE DEFENSE MINISTER. ALLON'S FOLLOWERS ARE ANGLING FOR THE SAME SORT OF CONCESSIONS THAT THE PERES CAMP INSISTED FROM RABIN FOLLOWING THE LABOR PARTY CONVENTION. A SEGMENT OF AHDUT AVODAH LEAD BY YITZHAK BEN AHARON HAS ARGUED FOR SPLITTING OFF FROM THE LABOR PARTY AND JOINING WITH MAPAM (AND POSSIBLY THE NEWLY-CREATED LEFTIST SHELLI BLOC) AND RUNNING FOR THE KNESSET UNDER ALLON'S LEADERSHIP. ALLON (SECONDED BY ISRAEL GALILI) HAS REJECTED THIS PROPOSAL AND HAS URGED HIS FOLLOWERS TO REMAIN IN THE LABOR PARTY.

4. THE DEAL THAT SEEMS TO BE CRYSTALLIZING IN THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD HAVE PERES AS PRIME MINISTER, ALLON AS DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE (ALTHOUGH ALLON IS UNDERSTOOD TO BE OF TWO MINDS OVER GIVING UP THE FOREIGN MINISTRY), AND EBAN AS FOREIGN MINISTER. SUPPORTING THIS LINE-UP ARE SUCH PERES FOLLOWERS AS YITZHAK NAVON AND YOSSIE SARID WHO BELIEVE THAT WITH DOVES LIKE ALLON AND EBAN IN SUCH STRONG POSITIONS, THE PERES CANDIDACY WOULD

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PAGE 03 TEL AV 02503 091218Z

APPEAR LESS HAWKISH AND MIGHT EVEN ENTICE MAPAM TO REMAIN IN THE ALIGNMENT. OPPOSING MAJOR CONCESSIONS TO ALLON, HOWEVER, ARE MOSHE DAYAN AND HIS CIRCLE OF HARD-LINERS IN THE LABOR PARTY. THE LATTER HAVE REPORTEDLY CAUSED A POSTPONEMENT OF A PERES-ALLON MEETING THAT HAD BEEN SCHEDULED FOR THIS MORNING. IT IS NOW EXPECTED TO TAKE PLACE LATER TODAY. THE OUTLOOK IS A PERES-ALLON DEAL WHICH WOULD GIVE PERES THE LEADERSHIP BY CONSENSUS AND THUS AVOID A CONTEST IN TOMORROW'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING.

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 09-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
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